

Washington, D.C.— Congressman Sanford Bishop today reminded Southwest Georgia farmers of an important upcoming deadline for disaster assistance programs.

Farmers who are eligible for disaster assistance under certain new Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance programs for losses caused by natural disasters in calendar year 2008, but who are not fully covered by crop insurance or the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), only have until Sept. 16, 2008, to pay the "buy-in" fee for 2008 crops, including grazing lands.

"It seems lately that Georgia has managed to be plagued by almost every form of foul weather at just the wrong times. So I would encourage our farmers to enroll in these programs to ensure they have options should a crop be ruined," said Bishop.

The 2008 Farm bill (the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008) authorized five new Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance programs: the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payment (SURE) program; Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP); Tree Assistance Program (TAP); Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP); and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey bees and Farm-raised Fish (ELAP) program. The "buy-in" waiver applies to SURE, TAP, LFP and ELAP for 2008 crop production and livestock losses.

To be eligible under the 2008 Farm bill for disaster assistance under SURE, ELAP and TAP, producers must have enrolled in crop insurance or NAP for all crops in all counties in which they have an interest, including grazing and hayland. To be eligible for disaster assistance for LFP, producers need only have crop insurance or NAP coverage for the specific grazing land for which assistance is being requested.

For more information on the "buy-in" waiver and applicable fee, please contact your local FSA County Office before the September 16 deadline. Or, visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov> for more information.